



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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Bluestem NEWS

BLUESTEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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CONTACT US

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FROM THE CEO

Shift Timing, Shift Savings

As we settle into the heat of July, our homes naturally use more electricity. Air conditioners run longer, refrigerators work harder, and daily routines from cooking dinner to doing laundry often overlap during the warmest parts of the day. That is also when the demand for electricity across our community is at its highest.

At Bluestem Electric our top priority is delivering safe, reliable energy whenever you need it. But during peak energy hours 3-6 p.m. there is added pressure on the grid as homes and businesses require larger amounts of electricity, all at the same time. On the hottest days, that strain can be significant.

The good news is that small changes at home can make a meaningful difference.

Think of our electric grid like a highway system. During rush hour, traffic is heavy, congestion builds and

everything slows down. But when drivers adjust their schedules, even slightly, it helps ease the bottleneck. The same principle applies to energy use.

By shifting some of your high-energy activities to off-peak hours — like doing laundry later in the evening, running the dishwasher when you go to bed, or cooking meals earlier in the day — you are helping spread out the overall system load. That reduces pressure on the grid during those critical peak hours.

Here are a few simple steps you can take to lower energy use during peak hours.

Smart technology can be a valuable partner in saving energy. A programmable or smart thermostat can automatically adjust your home's temperature when energy demand is at its highest, helping you stay



Michael Leitch

Continued on page 12B ▶

WEBSITE UPDATE COMING SOON

Bluestem is upgrading our website! This upgrade will allow for a more user-friendly experience that contains a lot of useful information. We look forward to sharing with our members.



SAME ENERGY. DIFFERENT IMPACT.

The demand for electricity is typically highest in the late afternoon during peak energy hours. You can help lower Bluestem's demand by shifting when energy-intensive activities happen.

SHIFT APPLIANCE USE TO OFF-PEAK HOURS.



- ▶ Start the dishwasher right before you go to bed.
- ▶ Use the oven earlier or later (during off-peak hours.)
- ▶ Space out use of major appliances.

USE A PROGRAMMABLE OR SMART THERMOSTAT.



- ▶ Automatically adjust the temperature setting during peak hours.
- ▶ Schedule home cooling cycles for efficiency.
- ▶ Use ceiling fans for additional cooling instead of lowering your thermostat.

OPT FOR LOW-ENERGY ALTERNATIVES DURING PEAK HOURS.



- ▶ Use small appliances like slow cookers or air fryers — or fire up the grill — instead of the oven.
- ▶ Air-dry clothes instead of using the dryer.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Shift Timing, Shift Savings Continued from page 12A ▶

comfortable while using energy more efficiently. Even a small adjustment of a few degrees during peak hours can make a difference.

In the kitchen, simple swaps can help, too. Using a slow cooker, air fryer or outdoor grill instead of the oven keeps your home more comfortable and reduces the need for additional cooling during the warmer parts of the day. And when it comes to laundry, air-drying clothes or spacing out loads can cut down on both energy use and indoor heat.

Don't overlook the power of ceiling fans, either. They can help you feel several degrees cooler, allowing you to raise your thermostat setting without sacrificing comfort.

These actions may seem small on their own, but together, they add up. When many members make mindful choices about when and how they use electricity, it helps reduce peak load, eases strain on the grid, and supports more stable energy costs for our local communities.

The demand charge on your Bluestem billing statement is something

each member can control. Demand is the rate of energy used at any given point in time and is measured by the highest rate at which a member uses electricity during a 60-minute period and is billed accordingly. The demand charge will be billed on the highest demand registered during the billing period. Each member's monthly demand is printed on their billing statement, as well as the date and time it was incurred. We encourage members to review past bills, monitor current bills and understand what impacts your demand each month.

That is the cooperative difference. As a member, you are not just a customer — you are part of a community working together to power our future. Every effort you make contributes to a stronger, more resilient system.

This summer, I encourage you to take a closer look at your daily routines. A few simple shifts can go a long way in keeping your home comfortable, your energy use efficient, and our grid running smoothly — no matter how high the temperatures climb.

SAFETY TIP

Keep TVs, lamps and other heat-producing items away from your thermostat. They can affect the temperature reading and cause your cooling system to run longer than needed.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Running multiple major appliances at the same time — like your dishwasher, laundry machine and oven — can spike energy demand and strain the grid, especially during peak hours (typically late afternoon to early evening). Instead of stacking appliance use, spread it out throughout the day or shift chores to off-peak hours when energy demand is lower. This not only helps improve overall efficiency but can also reduce your energy costs.

SOURCE: NRECA





HEADING OUT OF TOWN?

Take a few minutes to unplug. TVs, coffee makers, phone chargers and gaming systems consume energy even when in “off” mode.

TIPS TO AVOID UTILITY SCAMS



Scammers are using “smishing” — fake texts to pose as legitimate businesses, including your electric utility. They may claim your bill is overdue, your service will be disconnected, or you’re owed a refund, often including links to fake payment sites or requests for personal information. Never click suspicious links or respond to unexpected texts. Instead, verify claims by logging into your account through the official website or app. We will never request sensitive information like passwords or banking details via text.

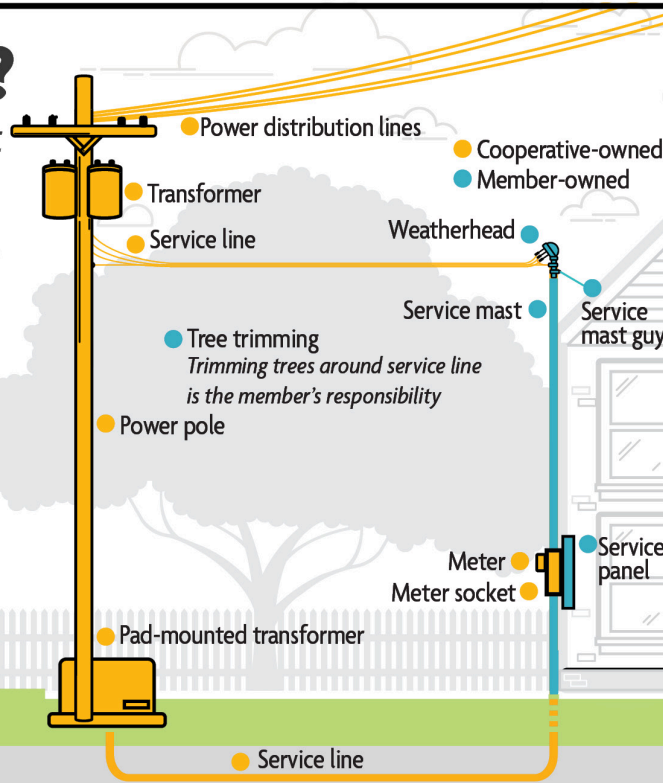


SOURCE: NRECA

Who Owns What?

Electric Cooperative-Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the **CO-OP (IN YELLOW)** and the **MEMBER (IN BLUE)**. If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



NOTE: THIS GRAPHIC DEPICTS OVERHEAD AND UNDERGROUND SERVICE. PLEASE BE AWARE OF WHICH TYPE OF SERVICE YOU RECEIVE AT YOUR HOME.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Bluestem Electric offers an automated pay-by-phone option 24 hours a day, seven days a week. By calling 844-973-2526 and following the prompts, you can pay with a credit card, debit card or electronic check with **NO FEES**. You will be required to use your Bluestem account number when calling in to ensure accuracy. If it is your first time using the system, be prepared to create a four-digit PIN. For security reasons and to comply with federal rules and Payment Card Industry (PCI) data security standards, Bluestem employees cannot take your payment information over the phone; however, they are happy to assist if you have questions and can be reached at 800-558-1580.



4 CONVENIENT PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR OUR MEMBERS

All members receive a standard monthly bill for their electrical use. Bills are due and payable upon receipt.



AUTO PAYMENT

Payments can be made automatically when you sign up for Automatic Bank Draft. Your bank account will be drafted on the due date of the bill each month. Members can sign up through our online bill pay system or through the office. You will receive a statement each month from Bluestem to let you know how much your bill is. The bill will say "Auto Pay on xx/xx/xxxx. Do not send payment."



ONLINE BILL PAY

Online bill pay is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by visiting www.bluestemelectric.com. Members also have the option to download the SmartHub app from the Android or Apple stores on their smartphone. By using your credit card, debit card or bank account, you can either set up a one-time payment or recurring. Recurring payments will be automatically withdrawn each month on the due date.



MAIL

You can pay your electric bill by mailing a check or money order in the return envelope that is included with your monthly bill. If you are mailing a check without the return envelope, please mail to: P.O. Box 33, Wamego, KS 66547.

Be sure to include the name and Bluestem account number of the account to be paid to ensure its proper posting. Please allow sufficient time for postal processing. Payments must be received in our office prior to the due date. We **DO NOT** use the mailing post date for the payment date.



PHONE

Our automated pay-by-phone system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 844-973-2526.

It is as simple as calling and following the voice prompts. This is a **FREE** service allowing you to make a payment by phone with a debit or credit card or electronic check with **NO FEES**.

For security reasons and to comply with PCI (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard), Bluestem employees cannot take your payment information over the phone.



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